

Congregation of Mark the Evangelist

Special Congregational Meeting

23 October 2016

Agenda

- 1. Opening**
- 2. Attendance and Apologies**
- 3. Business**
 - a. Correspondence received**
 - b. Consideration of Proposal**
 - c. Next Steps**
- 4. Close**

Congregation of Mark the Evangelist

MTEFP Options Discernment

23 October 2016

Preamble

On 23 October 2016 following worship the Congregation will meet to discern its preferred accommodation option from those identified by the Mark the Evangelist Futures Project feasibility study which was begun in August 2015. The options being addressed are those found by our feasibility study to be viable from financial, commercial and mission points of view. These are Options 1, 5.a., 6.a., 6.b., and 7.a., as described in material circulated for the 4 September presentation and discussion. (This documentation can be found on our web site www.marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au/spoar. The most accessible outlines will be found in the ‘SPOAR v14.2 Table’ and the ‘SPOAR v14.2 Summary’ on that web page).

The Church Council working group has prepared the proposal below for the congregation to consider. This proposal has emerged from the September and October coffee discussions and the most recent Church Council meeting as the one which seemed to be preferred by the greatest number of those participating. By considering this proposal, and discussing it alongside others already identified as being viable, the Congregation will have the opportunity to discern which accommodation option it prefers and complete this stage of the feasibility study process.

The meeting will be conducted in a consensus decision-making process. A reminder of how this process works is given below. Please note that there can be no proxy votes brought to a meeting. Members must be present to vote, although correspondence can be received and read to the meeting. Only confirmed members and members-in-association can make determining votes. The meeting will be conducted within a set time limit, finishing by 1pm at the latest. If no consensus has been reached by the time we are approaching this limit, we will determine whether we can leave the matter to a subsequent meeting.

In our earlier conversation groups two things have emerged as being particularly important to a large number of members:

- That MtE maintain its community, worship style, and particular characteristics, whatever shape its future takes.
- That the work of Hotham Mission be continued in North Melbourne and the surrounding suburbs.

These were identified by most participants in our various small group conversations as being ‘deal breaker’ concerns for them. The Church Council and its working group are very keen to see that these desires are met in this process. What follows is designed to assist us all to that end.

Proposal

That the congregation resolves to express its preference for proceeding under Option 5. a. to sell three quarters of the property (Union Memorial Church, the Manse, and the Curzon/Queensberry commercial and residential properties) for the purpose of developing the Hall, Supper Room and Elm St Cottage into its worship and meeting complex.

Key Points

- The focus of this proposal – Property Option 5.a., which retains the Hall, the Supper Room and the Elm St Cottage - emerged from the September and October coffee discussions and Church Council's latest meeting. Option 5.a. seemed to be preferred at that time by the greatest number of those participating and expressing their wishes, with the qualification that adequate floor space and facilities definitely needed to be gained in the renovation process.
- This proposal focusing on Option 5.a. involves selling the northern three quarters of the site, including Union Memorial Church. This would result in sufficient property sale proceeds to achieve three objectives – to renovate and integrate the three remaining buildings on the southern section of the site to maximise the floor space and facilities available and thereby maximise our mission opportunities, to share part of the sale proceeds with the wider church, and to ensure that the Congregation of Mark the Evangelist is financially sustainable into the future.
- Option 5.a. enables the congregation to continue to be accommodated on a site of which it already has beneficial use and with which it has become familiar as a worship and office space.
- Option 5.a. meets the financial goals, and sufficiently meets the missional and commercial goals, of Mark the Evangelist, Yarra Yarra Presbytery, and Synod Property Services.
- The subdivision and sale of the northern buildings would take around 2 years after which the renovation of the retained buildings would take another year or so.
- There are challenges for the congregation in this option involving the task of overseeing the project, heritage and planning approvals for the subdivision, property sales, and acceptable building renovation plans and costs. However these challenges are nowhere near as great as those presented by all but Option 1. That 'sell all' option carries property sales and off-site accommodation identification challenges of its own.

What would happen next?

- (i) **If there is consensus or agreement on the proposal:** Church Council will proceed to finalise the formal Business Case for presentation to Yarra Yarra Presbytery, Synod Property Services, BOMAR, and the Synod Property Board. This will involve refining the renovation concepts and preliminary costings and the congregation will have the final say on their acceptability.

Once the Property Board has approved the outcome of the feasibility study, we will proceed with approval stages 3F (property sale) and 3I (building plans). This will include procuring detailed architectural plans and costing for the renovation of the Supper Room and the Cottage, and the integration of the Elm Street

buildings (Hall, Supper Room and Cottage). Again during these stages the congregation will continue to have the opportunity to accept or modify the outcomes proposed. In particular, during the course of this work Mark the Evangelist will confirm that the renovation and integration remains financially viable and meets its revised mission objectives and space need requirements. Once agreed by the congregation, this further documentation will then be submitted to Presbytery and Synod for approval.

- (ii) **If the proposal is rejected:** Based on the meeting discussion, we move to an alternative proposal to enable the congregation to discern a different preferred Property Option.
 - (iii) **If the proposal is neither rejected nor accepted within the time constraints of the meeting:** The meeting will consider how it is to finalise its discernment of its preferred accommodation option.
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Consensus Procedures

1. **Why do we have meeting procedures at all?**
 - to facilitate the work of the meeting;
 - to enable all members to participate fully;
 - to assist the meeting to reach the best outcome possible.
2. **Why use consensus procedures?**
 - to help us as we seek to understand what is God's will on an issue;
 - to ensure we listen carefully to each other's unique insights;
 - to ensure participation is possible for all;
 - to work towards mutual solutions; and in the process
 - to strengthen the faith community;
 - to move away from an adversarial approach, where some will feel defeated;
 - to encourage broad ownership of the outcome of any resolution.
3. **What does consensus mean?**
 - a prayerful process, seeking to discern God's will;
 - seeking a common mind about the wisest way forward for the Church at this time;
 - decisions are made without voting in a process of genuine dialogue;
 - being respectful, mutually supportive and empowering of all entitled to participate.
4. **When is consensus achieved?**
 - there is unanimous support for a proposal; or
 - there is general support, with a few able to accept the outcome even if not their first choice.
5. **What does 'agreement' mean?**
 - a decision generally supported by the meeting;
 - the small number unable to accept it agree to live with the outcome so the matter may be resolved.

6. What happens when consensus or agreement cannot be reached? Possible options (among many) include the meeting deciding (by consensus):

- there's a deeper issue to affirm;
- some aspects can be agreed - the rest need further work or should not be decided at all;
- to adjourn discussion, perhaps with more work before reconsideration;
- to refer the issue to another group to deal with, or to advise;
- to decide it is unnecessary or inappropriate to continue dealing with the issue;
- to declare that there are diverse views which Christians may hold with equal integrity;
- (rarely) to decide to resolve an urgent matter by formal majority vote.

7. What is the role of the person chairing during consensus procedures?

- to assist the Council to discern the will of God as far as possible;
- to meet the needs and purposes of the Council and its members;
- to be familiar with, and experienced in, the use of the procedures;
- to be alert to the guidance of the Holy Spirit as members contribute;
- to be ready to pause for prayer or buzz group reflection as appropriate;
- to encourage trust and integrity in contributions;
- to ensure care for those whose honesty or minority voice may leave them vulnerable;
- to encourage response to speeches from members, reflecting the mood of the meeting;
- to suggest or encourage creative modifications of a proposal, picking up insights expressed;
- to summarise discussion from time to time to assist in focusing the discussion.

8. What is the purpose of the coloured cards?

- The cards are used either to test the “mood” of the group on a particular statement or proposal, or to take a formal vote on a proposal. The moderator/chair will indicate clearly what kind of indication is being taken when she/he calls for a show of cards;
- The orange card indicates “warmth” to a proposal in mood-testing, or a vote for a proposal when a vote is called;
- The blue card indicates “coolness” towards a proposal in mood-testing, a vote against a proposal when a vote is called; a blue card can also be used to indicate uncertainty as to whether you agree with a proposal;
- The yellow card is used to indicate that the person holding it wants to ask a question or speak further to the matter.

Congregation of Mark the Evangelist

MTEFP Discussion Groups

Ideas Raised

At the request of members of the congregation a further series of small discussion groups were convened in September and October 2016. The intention was to provide an opportunity for members to further consider and discuss the outcome of the feasibility study in preparation for the meeting on 23 October when the Congregation will identify its preferred option for accommodation in the future.

The discussions were wide-ranging. Members in some groups took the opportunity to express their individual preference for one option or another. Across these groups the thinking of members seemed to favour remaining on the current site, and Option 5.a. seemed to be the most often identified as the preferred option, with the qualification that steps should be taken to maximise the space and functionality in the renovation of both the Supper Room (the old Children's Centre) and the Elm St Cottage.

One group was particularly keen on the idea of partnering with another body, for example the Department of Education, or Melbourne City Council. This was seen by those raising it as a means by which Mark the Evangelist could have a more controlled presence on the whole site as it would remain a public amenity. They had in mind either a lease or a sale.

Another group was interested in knowing if there might be an alternative other than for worship for Mark the Evangelist's use of Union Memorial Church.

These ideas were discussed at Church Council and the Council's MTEFP Working Group was asked to look further at them.

The Working Group considered that ideas about the use or sale of the part of the site are for subsequent consideration. Partnering ideas may influence how the preferred option is pursued and should not influence which option is preferred. The Congregation should therefore proceed to decide on its preference at the meeting on 23 October. Once the preference is decided as the business case is finalised, it may be appropriate for both the Department of Education and Melbourne City Council to be consulted. The purpose of consultation would be to determine if there might be interest to purchase or lease parts of our site with a return to Mark the Evangelist that approximates the 'highest and best use' approach of the feasibility study.

The Working Group also considered the question of alternative uses to which Union Memorial Church might be put by Mark the Evangelist. The Working Group was of the view that any alternative use identified would need to generate sufficient income to finance the very expensive renovation of this heritage building if it was to be retained. As this is most unlikely, they were of the view that this idea should not be pursued further.

Church Council Working Group
12 October 2016

MARK THE EVANGELIST FUTURES PROJECT

STRATEGIC PROPERTY OPTIONS ANALYSIS REPORT (SPOAR) v14.2

Feasibility Assessment Table

(based on approved MtE BOMAR sharing policy exemptions)

This Feasibility Assessment Table summarises the results which are elaborated in each of the SPOAR v14.2 documents (the summary, the full version, and the full version with appendices) shared with members of the Congregation on the Mark the Evangelist SPOAR website in advance of the 4 September meeting.

The green, yellow, or red ‘traffic light’ boxes convey the extent to which each option meets the criteria set for the feasibility study – Commercial, Financial, and Missional. A green box indicates that the criteria have been met, yellow indicates partial achievement, and red indicates that the necessary criteria have not been met. The Commercial criteria are building development requirements set by Synod Property Services, the Financial are those to ensure the congregation is financially sustainable into the future, and the Missional are those arising from the MtE missional objectives for the project.

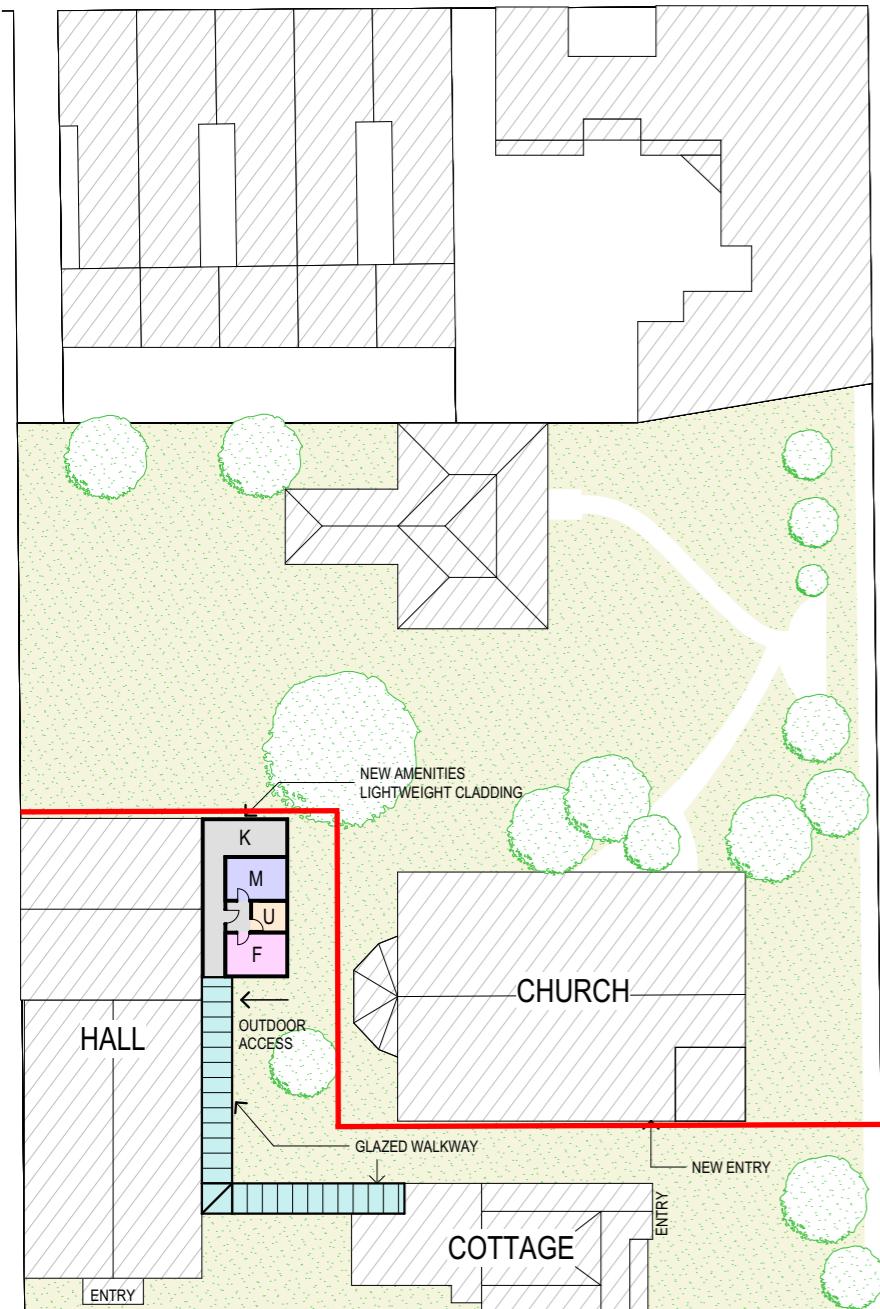
Mark the Evangelist has been advised by BOMAR that, at their meeting on 20 September, they approved both of the policy exemptions proposed by MtE Church Council.

Accordingly the Feasibility Assessment financial results which are to be used to inform the decision of the Congregation on 23 October 2016 are confirmed as follows:

Options for consideration	Commercial	Financial	Missional	BOMAR Contribution	Net Project Proceeds	Cash Reserves 2021	Operating Result 2021
Option 0 Status Quo	Red	Red	Yellow	-	-	\$2.1m	-\$63k
Option 1 Sell Whole Site	Yellow	Green	Yellow	\$1.5m	\$5.6m	\$8.1m	\$60k
Option 5.a Hall, Cottage	Yellow	Green	Yellow	\$1.6m	\$5.7m	\$8.2m	\$35k
Option 6.a Church, Hall, Cottage	Yellow	Red	Yellow	\$0.1m	\$3.3m	\$5.1m	-\$134k
Option 6.b Church, Hall, Cottage (Develop/Sell)	Yellow	Green	Yellow	\$3.8m	\$7.6m	\$9.3m	\$36k
Option 7.a Church, Cottage	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	\$0.3m	\$4.4m	\$6.3m	-\$49k

OPTION CONCEPT PLANS

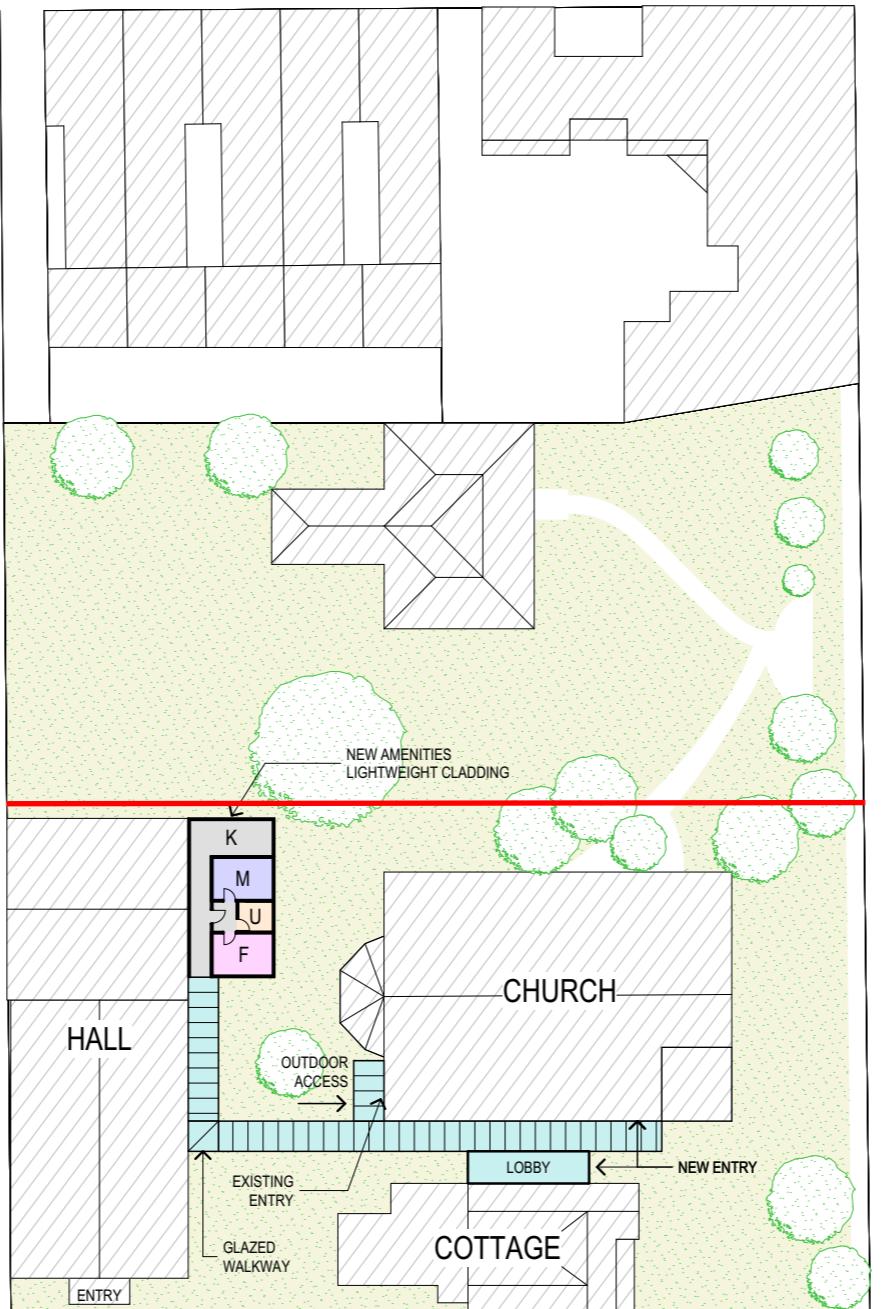
QUEENSBERRY STREET



OPTION 5A

	AREA	
EXISTING	HALL	366.8 m ²
	COTTAGE	140.8 m ²
PROPOSED	AMENITIES	37.25 m ²
	LINKAGE	54.1 m ²
598.8 m²		

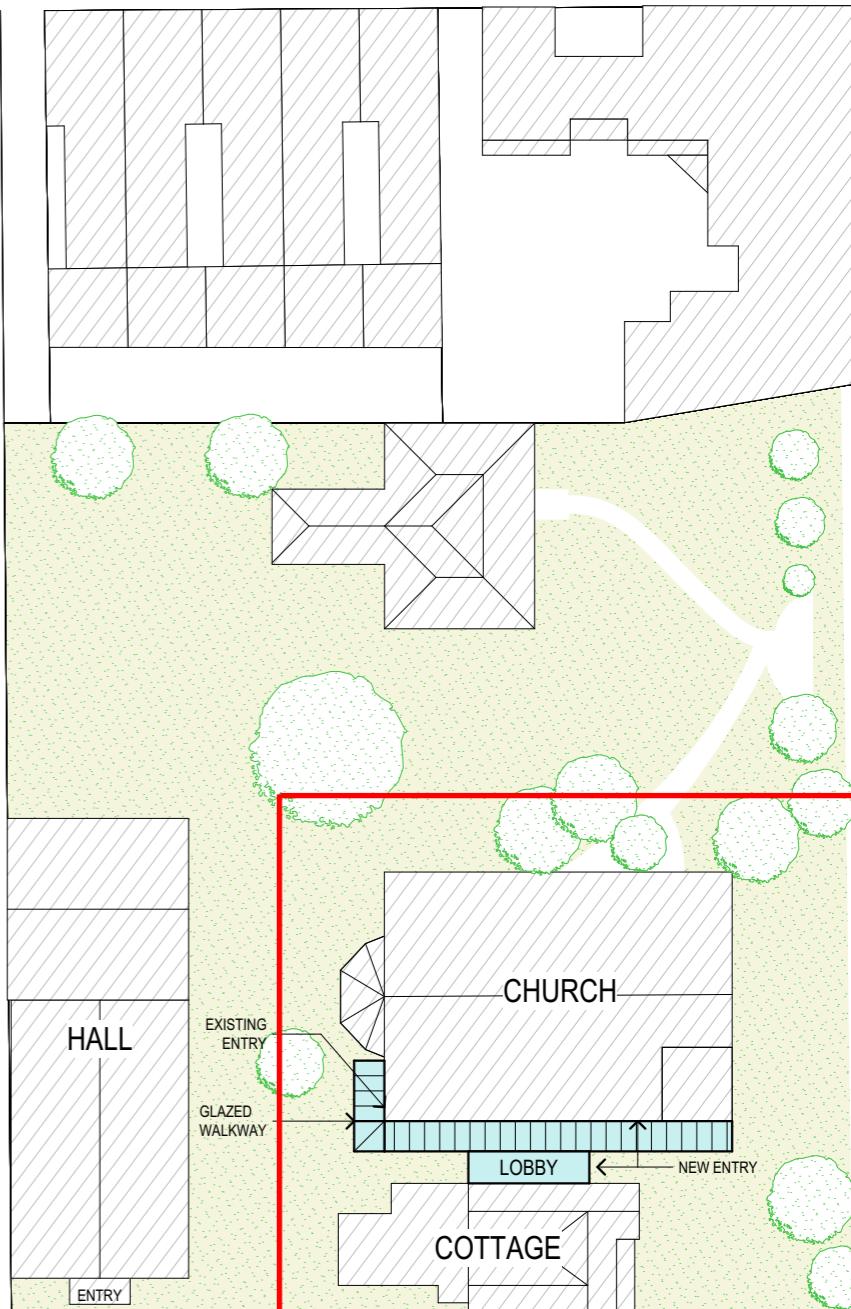
QUEENSBERRY STREET



OPTION 6A

EXISTING	HALL	366.8 m ²
PROPOSED	CHURCH	396.7 m ²
	COTTAGE	140.8 m ²
PROPOSED	AMENITIES	37.3 m ²
	LINKAGE	89.7 m ²
	LOBBY	16.9 m ²
1048.0 m²		

QUEENSBERRY STREET



OPTION 7A

EXISTING	CHURCH	396.7 m ²
PROPOSED	COTTAGE	140.8 m ²
	LINKAGE	58.0 m ²
PROPOSED	LOBBY	16.9 m ²
612.3 m²		